LISTING OF CLAIMS

The claims are unchanged from the previously submitted Amendment:

1-18. (Cancelled.)

19.(Previously Presented) A method for programming a voltage threshold (Vt) level of a core cell in a memory device, the method comprising steps of:

determining a desired Vt for the core cell;

programming a portion of the Vt of the core cell using a selected programming strength;

verifying that the portion of the Vt is successfully programmed;

adjusting the selected programming strength; and

repeating the step of programming, verifying, and adjusting until the Vt of the core cell is substantially equal to the desired Vt.

20.(Previously Presented) The method of claim 19, further comprising, after the step of verifying, a step of returning to the step of programming using the selected programming strength if it is determined that the portion of the Vt was unsuccessfully programmed.

21.(Previously Presented) The method of claim 20, wherein the step of adjusting is a step of weakening the selected programming strength.

22.(Previously Presented) The method of claim 20, wherein the step of adjusting is a step of weakening the selected programming strength as the Vt of the core cell approaches the desired Vt.

23.(Previously Presented) The method of claim 20, wherein the step of adjusting is a step of weakening the selected programming strength after each successful steep of verifying.

24.(Previously Presented) The method of claim 20, wherein the step of adjusting comprises steps of:

using the same selected programming strength for a first selected number of programming steps; and

weakening the programming strength for a second selected number of programming steps.